

Minutes

Approved
4/13/2010

Environmental Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

1. John Belian led the Flag Salute and called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM.

2. Attendance: Members - Harry Haon, John Belian, Mary Ellen Langan, Vicki Carmean; Non-Member - Peter Keenan from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

3. Although the Center for the Inland Bays (CIB) presentation by Todd Smallwood was cancelled due to weather conditions, Harry Haon, who is also on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), summarized some of the information from the CIB: The bays are not in good shape. Twenty years ago, the bays were designated as impaired, meaning that they were not good for fishing or swimming. Today they are not any worse, but not any better in spite of some of the "repair" measures that have been taken. The CIB was formed years ago to give oversight; however, it has not received political support and the CIB Board members do not want to make waves. For example, DNREC and the CIB have been struggling for years over what to do with the Indian River Power Plant (NRG) pollution problems. Recently DNREC has changed its direction by appointing Colin O'Mara as its leader. Now that Mr. O'Mara is in charge, NRG is shutting down some of its polluting units and looking into coal ash removal. On the other hand, efforts by some CAC members to work cooperatively on bay pollution with the State of Maryland have been blocked by the CIB.

Todd Smallwood's presentation is rescheduled for Tuesday, March 9th at 10:30.

In the following discussion, John Belian supported Harry Haon's summary by pointing out how important the pollution reduction efforts are in the bay. High Mercury levels cannot be measured by looking at water clarity. Also, temperature pollution from the cooling towers at the Indian River Plant impacts on the well being of fish, crabs, etc. Mr. Belian noted that due to Mercury pollution, official recommendations have been made in some areas to limit the number of times a person eats fish each month. The group agreed to promote Todd's presentation in March among the residents, especially since the health of the bays directly impacts on the well-being of the Town of Fenwick Island community.

4. Other Business

- New Lighting Ordinance: Vicki Carmean shared some of changes in this ordinance, which will have its second reading at the February Council meeting. Although the Environmental Committee did not have all of its suggestions incorporated into this ordinance, major steps were taken to improve the Lighting Ordinance's usefulness. Residents need to be made aware that enforcement begins with citizen complaints to the Town. A light meter is available for use in determining if someone is in violation.

Vicki Carmean suggested that committee members consider ways to approach Council about improving street light efficiency, especially since the Municipal Street Aid money has been eliminated in this year's State funding. This topic will be discussed in more detail at the March meeting.

- **Leadership:** Vicki Carmean pointed out there is some opposition from the Council to having a Council member serve as a co-chair. However, since other committee members have valid reasons for not being able to do this, she is willing to work with John Belian as a co-chair until someone else can step forward. Vicki committed herself to a consensus-building leadership style. Several other Town committees have Council members serving in chair positions.

Vicki Carmean added that she has been in touch with Lois Twilley, who is the Environmental Chair for the Barefoot Gardeners Club. Lois is considering joining the Town's Environmental Committee since many activities overlap.

- **FIN Contributions:** Due to editing, meaningful information was omitted from the last Environmental Committee FIN contribution. The group affirmed that it wanted more pertinent information included.
- **Dunes:** Tony Pratt's recent Council presentation about dune conditions was praised, and it was suggested that the Environmental Committee check to see if Mr. Pratt could give a presentation about the dunes at a future committee meeting when more residents would be available to attend.
- **Adopt-a-Highway:** Although not present, Buzz Henifin sent word that he is interested in having the Environmental Committee become involved in this program. This will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.
- **Due to time limitations,** other agenda items were not discussed but will be covered at the March meeting.

5. Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 9th at 10:30 AM.

6. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki L. Carmean